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ABSTRACT

This booklet, which is part of a series demonstrating the scope of employer involvement in school-to-careers, highlights the efforts of three retail employers and two "intermediary" organizations connecting workplace experiences to classroom learning for secondary education students. The introduction presents a series overview and lists the names, locations, and featured practices of the employers and organizations. The next sections examine the retail industry; reasons why school-to-careers is an ideal strategy for addressing retail industry skill needs; sales and service skill standards; and how the employer participation model works with students and teachers. These employers and intermediaries and their best practices are profiled: (1) the READY Program (Chicago, Illinois), which is helping employers provide a spectrum of opportunities for young people; (2) Sears (Albuquerque, New Mexico), which is helping prepare and hire from a trained pool of students; (3) Winn-Dixie (Jacksonville, Florida), which is highlighting career pathways from entry-level to vice president; (4) JCPenney (Dallas, Texas), which is taking part in curriculum development; and (5) Lancaster County Academy (Lancaster, Pennsylvania), which is serving all key partners. The following items are also included: (1) an annotated list of

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eight organizations and resources; (2) a glossary; and (3) a discussion of steps to build on the National Employer Leadership Council's agenda. (MN)

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Best Practices in School-to-Careers

The Retail Industry

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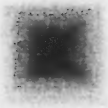

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National Employer Leadership Council

The National Employer Leadership Council, an initiative of the National Alliance of Business, is a business membership organization dedicated to expanding and enhancing employer involvement in school-to-careers. The NELC advocates and supports school-to-careers initiatives combining classroom courses with real-life learning to ensure all students meet high standards and, therefore, are prepared for continuing education and the cutting-edge jobs of the 21st Century. NELC members, and the NELC Leadership Board of senior business executives, are committed to sustaining the significant changes in teaching and learning taking place across the country as a result of school-to-careers.

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National Retail Federation

The National Retail Federation (NRF) is the world's largest retail trade association with membership that comprises all retail formats and channels of distribution including department, specialty, discount, catalogue, Internet, and independent stores. NRF members represent an industry that encompasses more than 1.4 million U.S. retail establishments, employs more than 20 million people – about one in five American workers – and registered 1999 sales of $3 trillion. NRF's international members operate stores in more than 50 nations. In its role as the retail industry's umbrella group, NRF also represents 32 national and 50 state associations in the U.S. as well as 36 international associations representing retailers abroad. The NRF Foundation is the research and education arm of the National Retail Federation, and provides leadership for directing the retail industry's development of national, voluntary skill standards and related educational and workforce initiatives.

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Introduction

This booklet is part of a series that demonstrates the scope and importance of employer involvement in school-to-careers. Each booklet in the series examines employer roles in specific industry sectors. This publication focuses on the importance of partnerships between educators and companies that rely on a skilled workforce for the retail industry. It is the result of the NELC's partnership with the National Retail Federation and the NRF Foundation.

Across the country, employers from all industries are supporting school-to-careers as a critical span of the bridge that prepares students for future education and careers. School-to-careers has brought together employers, educators, students, and community leaders to build a coordinated series of activities that provide students with a clear understanding of the education and career options available to them and the skills and competencies required for success.

While employers are committed to improving the core academic achievement levels of all students and preparing them for success in all careers, employers in different industries can play unique roles in enhancing learning for specific students with particular interests and aptitudes. Together, the activities of all employers provide opportunities to connect with all students so they can learn, grow, and ultimately take control of their own educational and career goals.

Best Practices in School-to-Careers: The Retail Industry highlights the efforts of three retail employers and two "intermediary" organizations connecting workplace experiences to classroom learning to help young people develop skills for success. While each profile recognizes a specific activity or series of activities, together they demonstrate the need to create multiple opportunities for young people to learn and grow:

1. **JCPenney, Dallas, Texas:** Taking part in curriculum development.
2. **Sears, Albuquerque, New Mexico:** Helping prepare and hiring from a trained pool of students.
3. **Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc., Jacksonville, Florida:** Highlighting career pathways from entry-level to vice president.
4. **Lancaster County Academy, Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Intermediary Profile):** Serving all key partners.

5. **Retail and Education Alliance for Development of Youth, Chicago, Illinois (Intermediary Profile):** Helping employers provide a spectrum of opportunities for young people.

The Retail Industry

In 1999, the overall retail sales figure in the United States totaled nearly three trillion dollars, with no signs of slowing down. Currently, more than one million retail companies operate over 1.4 million retail establishments, ranging from large department stores to specialty to catalog. Employing 20 million workers, or one in five American workers, this number is expected to expand to 24 million workers by 2005. Retailing, defined by the National Retail Federation as "the timely delivery of goods and services demanded by consumers at prices they can afford," by its sheer scope, has a direct relationship with most American families, whether as the employer or as the provider.

In addition to the growth of the industry, retail employers need to adapt to changes in the buying habits of consumers. As interest in non-store retailing – such as on-line, television, and home shopping – grows, retailers are learning to navigate new shopping environments and, in essence, rethink the role of the conventional retail store. As these changes continue and new ones develop, both current and future employees must be able to pioneer new strategies for marketing, distribution, customer satisfaction, and inventory control. As a result, a well-trained workforce is critical to the needs of the retail industry.

Retail and School-to-Careers: Partnerships for the Future

While the retail industry is well established, its workforce, by contrast, is young. More than 30 percent of retail employees in 1995 were under 25 years old, compared to only 15 percent in other industries. As the industry in which most Americans get their first work experience, the retail industry faces a unique challenge as the stepping stone for many into the working world.

The part-time, entry-level retail

employee ranks are made up primarily of young adults, many of whom have little work experience, and, therefore, lack basic workplace skills. While there are a number of skills that are specific to the retail industry, retail employers in large part are most concerned with hiring workers who possess basic customer service, workplace, and academic skills.

Second, there is significant staff turnover. As many students gain experience, they leave retail jobs to pursue what they perceive as "real" careers. Others leave due to the misperception that retail only offers one career path – sales. Opportunities in retail, contrary to popular belief, are not limited to sales, but include buying, store, and corporate, management; marketing; and human resources, to name a few.

Because of the lack of skills and experience of those entering the industry, as well as the general youth of its workforce, the retail industry bears higher-than-average training and hiring costs. Some establishments, for example, suffer annual employee turnover rates as high as 300 percent. Such turnover has a direct financial cost in training and hiring, but can also lead to lost sales and productivity, as faces keep changing and the "team" continually needs to regroup.

School-to-careers (STC) activities are a natural fit for retail companies because they help young people improve their academic achievement within the context of retail work experience, developing and strengthening the retailing skills that employers often find lacking in many students. STC activities also help young people attain critical workplace skills, reducing training costs for employers and providing a strong foundation for young people to gain success in the workplace.

From the perspective of retail employers, STC is a long-term investment strategy for promoting retail career paths and developing the skills required of the future workforce. It allows educators and retailers to partner to develop competency-based curriculum that improves academic achievement and prepares youth for the opportunities and challenges of jobs in the 21st Century. By encouraging young people to apply knowledge to real-world settings, retailers are raising the expectations of future employees and creating a long-term commitment to the industry.

Sales and Service Skill Standards

Many successful STC partnerships in retail are utilizing pilot national Retail Skill Standards, developed under the leadership of the NRF Foundation. Hundreds of employers, including retail companies of all sizes, served on expert panels, participated in validation reviews, and completed surveys to ensure that the standards include real skills demanded across the retail industry.

Since the pilot standards were launched in 1994, they have been the basis for a wide range of school-, work-, and community-based activities helping young people obtain the skills required for success in retail and all industries. They are designed to help students, job applicants, and employers by identifying the abilities and knowledge used by professional sales associates. Retail standards include the portable skills that are applicable to many career paths within retail and other industries.

Since their inception, the Retail Skill Standards have been voluntary in their use but highly encouraged as a way for retailers to improve customer service and productivity. Based on the success of the pilot standards, the NRF Foundation took a leading role in establishing the Sales and Service Voluntary Partnership (SSVP) under the auspices of the National Skill Standards Board.* The SSVP is managed by NRF and has its own staff and Board of Directors. It currently serves more than 500 members, representing a cross-section of the affiliated industries.

The Sales and Service Skill Standards and certification system, which will be rolled-out nationwide throughout 2001, is designed to serve as the industry standard for entry-level through first-supervisor position, and be recognized by all retail wholesale, personal service, and real estate employers. It is expected that as the certification gains exposure and standing, it will ultimately be viewed as a critical part of a young person's education and experience.

* The SSVP is charged with identifying Sales and Service Skill Standards for the retail, wholesale, personal services, and real estate industries, and developing the associated assessment and certification system.

Implementing STC: The Employer Participation Model

There are a number of means by which employers can help students develop skills and abilities. The National Employer Leadership Council's *Employer Participation Model* (EPM) provides a clear framework for employer activity. It is a resource for employers considering involvement in STC as well as education and community organizations searching for ways to reach out to employers. This section focuses on EPM activities for working with students and teachers to highlight specific roles for employers.

I. Working with Students

The EPM outlines a continuum of activities in which employers can support student learning. These activities help students: 1) become ***aware*** of a wide range of careers and the skills required to succeed in them; 2) ***explore*** different career areas of interest in ways that support their academic achievement; and 3) ***prepare*** for direct or future entry into multiple career paths.

While not every employer provides every activity, a true STC "system" is one in which all these types of activities exist for students at all levels. In the best of initiatives, several or teams of employers work together to make sure the full spectrum of opportunities is available for students. The diagram below illustrates the progression of opportunities provided by employers for students.

Retail Career Awareness

Students today need more information on the diversity of career options in the retail industry, the ways in which the retail industry has changed in recent years, and the academic and workplace skills required to succeed. Specific Career Awareness activities for employers include visiting schools to discuss

"Stage"	Career Awareness	Career Exploration	Career Preparation
EPM Activity	Career Talks	Job Shadowing	Internships
	Career Days/Fairs	Job Rotations	Apprenticeship
	Worksite Tours		Mentoring

these opportunities and hosting tours of businesses to share this information with a large number of students.

An emphasis on the retail skills required of employees is an important component of Career Awareness activities. Employers can stress how the skills needed for professional success are developed through a strong core academic curriculum coupled with workplace applications. With the right information, students begin to see the potential of a career in retail and how to reach this potential through education and school-to-careers.

The Retail and Education Alliance for Development of Youth Chicago, Illinois

Providing A Spectrum of Opportunities

The Retail and Education Alliance for Development of Youth (READY) began in 1996 to provide retail-based educational opportunities for students and educators. The impetus for this public-private partnership arose from the need for a more skilled, motivated, and career-focused workforce among local Chicago-area retailers. To ensure a high-quality program, the READY curriculum incorporated the pilot skill standards developed by the NRF Foundation. After more than four years of implementation, READY serves more than 800 students in 27 schools, with 25 companies actively participating. These exemplary companies range from large, name-brand institutions, such as The Gap, Marshall Field's and Carson Pirie Scott, to specialty and home appliance stores.

READY helps businesses deliver Career Awareness, Exploration, and Preparation activities. In the area of Career Awareness, participating retailers visit schools to address students directly through presentations and question and answer sessions. Topics range from trends in the retail industry to the qualities sought in prospective employees. The presentations are critical opportunities for students to ask questions of businesspeople and realize that skills and knowledge learned in the school, particularly through the READY program, are essential in the workplace.

The READY program requires that students participate in a part-time work experience during the summer after their junior year in high school. This experience continues on a part-time basis during the senior year. A READY site facilitator visits individual worksites to observe student progress, help solve any problems, and gather feedback from retailers and students.

Employers also extend work-based learning experiences to educators. Teachers can job shadow or choose to participate in a more extensive summer work experience. This allows educators to understand firsthand the changing dynamics of the retail industry and observe what their own students learn in the workplace.

The latest READY innovation, the READY Retail Learning Center, was developed in partnership with mall developer Urban Retail Properties Company.

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Housed in the Oakbrook Mall, the Center involves retailers in STC activities, such as hosting tours of retail operations; conducting mock interview sessions; providing job shadowing, mentoring, and internship opportunities; and sharing expertise in problem-based learning projects.

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Retail Career Exploration

Once students learn about the importance of developing concrete skills for work and life, they may choose to explore specific career areas more closely. Employers can provide access to their business and employees to demonstrate further the importance of classroom learning to developing required skills. Exploration activities can include job shadowing at a company or rotations through a series of companies to understand the range and scope of retail opportunities. Involvement in activities through the READY Retail Learning Center (see previous profile) is one example of how retailers provide Career Exploration opportunities for students.

Retail Career Preparation

This, the most intense set of activities, involves employers helping students reinforce their academic skills and supporting their entry into retail careers by offering intensive work-based learning and mentoring opportunities. Equally important is the use of industry-based standards that help students benchmark their skills to those required on the job.

Sears
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Hiring from a Trained Pool

The Sears store in Albuquerque, New Mexico is the largest volume store in the district with 375 employees. Like many retail establishments, Sears finds that one of its greatest challenges is retaining employees. As a result, Sears relies on

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partnerships with programs like Youth Opportunities in Retailing (YOR) to provide a steady stream of pre-trained applicants for full-time and part-time jobs at Sears.

The company's skill needs echo the needs of many retailers throughout the country, and are reflected in the retail skill standards developed – problem-solving, accessing information, reading, active listening, and people skills (which are particularly important in a profession built on customer interaction).

In direct response to articulated needs of the retail employer community, YOR was developed by the New Mexico Retail Association as a program to promote immediate, part-time work experience and future career paths available in the industry and help students prepare for those opportunities. YOR training supplements in-school curriculum and uses voluntary skill standards as a basis for assessment and training. At the worskite, managers provide evaluations of job performance and provide regular feedback to students. Teachers and YOR staff partner to monitor job and school performance. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average as a requirement of the program, and tutoring is available on a referral basis.

Because of the program's track record, when a YOR student's resume comes to Sears, it is looked at with closer attention. Despite receiving approximately 50 applications a week, Sears goes through a rigorous process to screen all applicants. First, applicants must take a standardized test and achieve a minimum score in order to schedule an interview, and YOR students consistently outperform their non-YOR peers. They have developed a reputation in the local area as students who are trained, possess many of the basic and essential skills needed for a career in retail, and are more focused. Because of their training, YOR students are more competitive candidates and thus a hot commodity among the retail employers in the area.

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Winn-Dixie
Jacksonville, Florida

From Entry-Level to Vice President

In more than 1,000 stores across 14 states, with sales exceeding $14 billion in 1999, Winn-Dixie makes its presence known as the Sunbelt's largest food retailer. It is focusing more and more on the one-stop shopping needs of its customers. As a result, Winn-Dixie provides service centers covering a range of goods, from international wines and banking to photo processing and dry cleaning.

For more than forty years, Winn-Dixie has worked with DECA, an

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association of marketing students operated at the secondary and postsecondary levels by state Departments of Education, as an integral part of their marketing curriculum. Winn-Dixie employs more than 5,000 high school and college DECA students. The partnership has proven fruitful to Winn-Dixie, as former DECA students have risen up the ranks of Winn-Dixie's management team, from the retail stores to the executive offices.

DECA integrates the pilot Retail Skill Standards developed by the NRF Foundation into its curriculum and national competition structure. In high school, DECA students take marketing classes and learn about the free enterprise philosophy while working with an employer. Teachers/advisors serve as coaches and counselors while students learn the culture, work ethic, and practical applications of the business world through employment. The DECA advisor works with the supervisor at a participating company, such as Winn-Dixie, to determine a training plan for the student. Grades are determined by both classroom and work performance.

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II. Working with Teachers

Teachers serve as the direct link to student learning. To help the education system effectively prepare students for career and life success, employers can partner with schools and teachers to facilitate Career Awareness, Exploration, and Preparation activities. Exposure to and guidance from employers assists teachers in reinforcing the skills that students develop through STC. As outlined in the *Employer Participation Model,* the connection between employers and teachers can occur in two ways:

- **Employers Working Directly with Teachers.** Direct connections between employers and educators is critical to ensuring that teachers fully understand the demands of the workplace and how developing these workplace skills can support academic learning. Employers can work with teachers to develop classroom projects and school-based enterprises that help students make continued connections to the retail industry. Short- and long-term teacher externships allow teachers to spend time at a workplace to see first-hand the demands of the industry. Teachers then work with employers and other educators to

apply lessons learned in the workplace to benefit students.

- **Employers Supporting the Work of Teachers.** Employers play important roles in helping teachers use workplace experiences to promote student achievement. Employers can work with teachers to develop curriculum and instructional materials that directly help students build retail skills and the academic basics of reading, math, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. Equally important is integrating industry skill standards into academic standards to promote student academic achievement through contextual, work-based experiences.

JCPenney
Dallas, Texas

A Company Taking Part in Curriculum Development

JCPenney points with pride to its long history of working with young people. Since 1946, the company has been involved with DECA/Marketing Education, a national program for high school students consisting of three parts: marketing education classes, work-based experiences, and a companion student organization build around industry-based competitive events. JCPenney's commitment to DECA and the work it does in preparing young people, mainly those in grades 11 and 12 of high school, to be successful in the workplace, is evidenced by the active participation of the company's manager of community relations and contributions on DECA's National Advisory Board. As a member of the National Advisory Board, JCPenney provides input on the continuous improvement of DECA's competencies and marketing-education curriculum, ensuring they are current and meet retail employer needs.

JCPenney not only contributes to curriculum development, but also encourages its stores nationwide to hire DECA members. Thousands of DECA students each year serve as part-time associates. Once hired, students undergo a rigorous training program designed internally at JCPenney. This eight hour "Point of Sale" training program was piloted in 1996, is fully computer-based, and encompasses the pilot Retail Skill Standards developed by the NRF Foundation.

Students come to JCPenney while they are participating in DECA, not at the end of their program of study. Thus, they are still developing their skills while in the workplace and able to utilize their experience to provide a context for the classroom learning.

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Third Party Intermediaries

Employer involvement is often facilitated by an "intermediary" organization. Intermediaries serve as third-party "brokers" who ensure that partnerships between employers and educators meet their intended goals and maintain quality. They convene key partners to determine what types of programs and policies are needed to meet the goals of both business and education. Once this set of programs and policies is outlined, they provide direct services to employers, educators, and young people to ensure that the needs and expectations of all are being met and that additional partners are recruited and engaged in the emerging system.

There are many intermediaries across the country working closely with retail employers. Many local school-to-careers partnerships have established committees or other structures to focus specifically on retail skills. Others include retail employers in broad efforts to meet the needs of all employers, students, and teachers.

Lancaster County Academy
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

The Benefits of Location

There are times when the intermediary bringing all the key players together is also the educator. At the Lancaster County Academy, a school located inside a major shopping mall – the Park City Center – learning complements the development of workplace skills and experience. The school recruits the business partners, not a difficult task as many of its strongest supporting employers such as Kohl's, American Outfitters, EMS, and Naturalizer are housed under the same roof. The Joint Operating Committee for the Academy includes a school board member from each of the ten participating school districts that refer students to the Academy, the local School-to-Work County Partnership, local employers, and the Chamber of Commerce.

By convening the Committee on a regular basis, the Academy ensures that communication among the key stakeholders is maintained and new information is shared. It is precisely because of this group that the Academy is up-to-date on the labor market status of its region. Lancaster County service sector jobs experienced a growth of 3,500 positions between April 1998 and April 1999. The region has an extremely tight job market, with a 2.9 percent unemployment rate. As a result, employers are scrambling to find qualified employees and avoid situations where stores close early because of their inability to find enough workers for the shifts.

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In discussion with the key partners, who were committed to a focus on core academic skills, the Academy broadened its scope and offered a wide range of academic courses, not just activities focused on retail. This, however, has not diminished its commitment to preparing young people for success in the workplace.

The Academy operates as an alternative high school that provides a second chance to those who have left school to re-enroll, earn a regular high school diploma (not a GED), and acquire the work skills desired by today's employers. The school provides self-paced instruction, flexible hours, career exploration and labor market awareness, work-based learning experiences, and links to education and training beyond high school, including college, military and workforce.

The Academy recruits the business community and non-profit and public service agencies to participate in the Academy's required School-to-Work and Service Learning components. Employers, at the conclusion of this component, formally assess the students' performance. In addition, employers provide informational interviews for the students and conduct mock interviews.

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Next Steps

Greater numbers of employers are participating in STC to help young people develop the skills integral to success in the 21st Century. To get involved:

- **Find out what is happening around school-to-careers in your state and community.** Every state has a STC director and office, and most communities house local STC partnerships. Contacting these individuals and organizations to express your interest in STC will help them connect you and create opportunities to work with teachers and students.

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- **Connect with the NRF Foundation's Retail Employer Link to Education (RELE) initiative.** Contact the NRF Foundation to find out how

you can participate in their STC activities.

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- **Join the National Employer Leadership Council.** NELC members receive frequent updates and resources on employer involvement in STC, and become part of a network of thousands of employers who are working together to build STC opportunities for all.

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- **Check out these other key organizations and resources:**

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Glossary of Terms

The following terms, used throughout this publication, come from the NELC's *Employer Participation Model,* a guide designed to help employers structure their involvement in school-to-careers. For additional information or to receive copies of the EPM, please contact the NELC directly.

Career Awareness

- *Career Talks:* Employers and employees visit students in the classroom and explain the work in their industry or company.
- *Career Days/Career Fairs:* Special events are typically held to allow students to meet with postsecondary educators, employers and employees, or human resource professionals to learn about education and work opportunities. Career day activities are designed to help students think about their interests and abilities in relation to potential careers.
- *Worksite Tours:* Students visit the worksite, talk with employees, and observe the workplace activities.

Career Exploration

- *Job Shadowing:* A student follows an employee at a company location to learn about a particular occupation or industry. Job shadowing can help students explore a range of career objectives and select a career major for the latter part of high school.
- *Job Rotations:* At a worksite, students transfer among a number of positions and tasks that require different skills and responsibilities in order to understand the steps that go into creating a product and/or service, how their own effort affects the quality and efficiency of production and customer service, and how each part of the organization contributes to productivity.

Career Preparation

- *Internships:* Students work for an employer for a specified period of time to learn about a particular industry or occupation. Students' workplace activities may include special summer projects, a sample of tasks from different jobs, or tasks from a single occupation. These may or may not include financial compensation.
- *Apprenticeship*
  - > *Youth Apprenticeship:* A multi-year program that combines school- and work-based learning in a specific occupational area or occupational cluster and is designed to lead directly into either a related postsecondary program, entry-level job, or registered apprenticeship program. Youth Apprenticeships may or may not include financial compensation.
  - > *Apprenticeship (Registered):* Registered apprenticeship programs meet specific federally-approved standards designed to safeguard the welfare of apprentices. The programs are registered with the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT), U.S. Department of Labor, or one of 27 State Apprenticeship Agencies or Councils approved by BAT. Apprenticeships are relationships between an employer and employee during which the worker, or apprentice, learns an occupation in a structured program sponsored jointly by employers and labor unions or operated by employers and employee associations.
- *Mentoring:* Employee(s) who possess the skills and knowledge to be mastered by a student, and who instructs the student, critiques the performance of the student, challenges the student to perform well, and works in consultation with teachers or youth organizations and the employer of the student.

Building on the NELC Agenda

The National Employer Leadership Council is a business membership organization dedicated to expanding and enhancing employer involvement in school-to-careers. The NELC advocates and supports school-to-careers initiatives combining classroom courses with real-life learning to ensure all students meet high standards and, therefore, are prepared for continuing education and the cutting-edge jobs of the 21st Century. NELC members, and the NELC Leadership Board of senior business executives, are committed to sustaining the significant changes in teaching and learning taking place across the country as a result of school-to-careers.

The NELC recognizes that as the knowledge economy continues to experience rapid change in the nature of work and the type of jobs available, an increasing number of employers, educators, and community organizations are striving for a seamless education system that equips individuals with knowledge that can be upgraded continuously. These systems will be based on defining and articulating strategies for building "knowledge networks" that help align education and training activities directly with employer demand.

The development of these systems requires an understanding of how skill needs link to skill development. The employer community and, as a result, the NELC, is advocating for national, state, and local education and training systems built on four common principles:

- A clear process for determining and understanding **employer demand.** This includes regular and ongoing information on the foundational ("soft") and academic skills required of all workers, as well as the occupation- and industry-specific skills required in a variety of jobs.
- Methods to set **benchmarks and standards for competency based directly on this employer demand.** Critical to this principle is ensuring that programs measure what individuals can do in order to ensure that employer needs will be met.
- **Certification and credentialing** of these skills and abilities that are valued and used by employers in the hiring, re-training, and education investment processes.
- Supporting **curriculum and programs designed to build these competencies and leading to these certificates and credentials.**

To find out more, contact: **National Employer Leadership Council,** c/o National Alliance of Business, 1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005, Phone: (800) 360-NELC, E-mail: nelc@nelc.org; Website: www.nelc.org

The work of the NELC is supported by the employer community and the National School-to-Work Office, a joint initiative of the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor.